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STAAS & HALSEY LLP  
700 11TH STREET, NW  
SUITE 500  
WASHINGTON, DC 20001

EXAMINER

ROBINSON BOYCE, AKIBA K

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 05/09/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/487,265

Applicant(s)

MORI ET AL.

Examiner

Akiba K Robinson-Boyce

Art Unit

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 January 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nakaoka (US Patent 6,092,048).

As per claims 1, 6, 15, 16, 17, 21, Nakaoka discloses:

An acquisition unit...(Col. 8, lines 19-24)...Information indicating an opening state of a message...(Col. 3, line 13, [created])...Information indicating a completion state...(Col. 3, line 13, [completed])...information indicating expiration...(Col. 4, lines 30-32);

A control unit...(Col. 19, lines 13-19)...indicating the opening state...(Col. 3, lines 22-26)...the information indicating the completion state of the job of the receiver...(Col.

3, lines 28-29)...the information indicating the expiration of the term...(Col. 3, lines 22-23, Col. 4, lines 30-32).

A plurality of terminal devices...(Fig. 25, [1030])...

As per claims 2, 18, Nakaoka discloses:

Said control unit forcibly displays on the terminal device the information indicating the opening state...(Col. 3, lines 22-26, lines 28-29, lines 22-23 and Col. 4, lines 30-32)...together with a title...(Col. 4, lines 19-35).

As per claims 3, 19, Nakaoka discloses:

Said control unit causes the terminal device to forcibly display a completion state table...(Fig. 7, where opening state is represented by [7020], and the completion state is represented by TSK COMPL).

As per claims 4, 20, Nakaoka discloses:

A message generation unit generating a message provided with a confirmation button...(Col. 13, lines 19-26);

When the message receiver presses the confirmation button said control unit determines that the receiver has completed his or her job, obtains a number of receivers...(Col. 13, lines 23-25, Col. 14, lines 13-29)...allows the information indicating the completion state to be displayed on the terminal...(Col. 3, lines 28-29).

As per claim 5, Nakaoka discloses:

Said message generation unit generates a message containing an input column of an offered term...; said control unit causes a terminal device of the transmitter to

display...(Col. 1, lines 22-24, Col. 3, lines 22-25, where the "task entry works that should be executed" represent to offered term of the present invention).

As per claim 7, Nakaoka discloses:

Said information indicating the opening state and said information indicating the completion state contains a number of receivers who have opened the message...who have completed their jobs...(Fig. 11)...an opening rate...a completion rate...(Col. 1, lines 36-39 W/ col. 9, lines 40-42, col. 9, lines 49-51, where the rates are part of the work progress because in order to progress, one must first open the job, start it and then go to the completion state in a certain amount of time).

As per claim 8, Nakaoka discloses:

Said control unit causes the terminal device to display the information indicating the opening state...(Col. 3, lines 22-26, lines 28-29, lines 22-23 and Col. 4, lines 30-32)...when a current date reaches a date specified...(Col. 4, lines 30-35, [deadline]).

As per claim 9, Nakaoka discloses:

A storage unit...(Col. 3, lines 1-4, where the examiner is interpreting the task as the message of the present invention)...a name of a receiver...(Col. 3, line 7, [worker]), information indicating an opening state...(Col. 3, line 13, [created])...Information indicating a completion state...(Col. 3, line 13, [completed])...information indicating expiration...(Col. 4, lines 30-32);

A control unit...(Col. 19, lines 13-19)...indicating the opening state...(Col. 3, lines 22-26)...the information indicating the completion state of the job of the receiver...(Col.

3, lines 28-29)...the information indicating the expiration of the term...(Col. 3, lines 22-23, Col. 4, lines 30-32).

The following is inherent with Nakaoka because the environment of this system is a network type flow, therefore the transmitter will always be known as the network. In addition, since the opening, completion and expiration states are valued, this means that the system must also determine the current date in order to figure out what the values for the opening, completion and expiration states are:

A name of a transmitter...

A current date...

As per claim 10, Nakaoka discloses:

Said control unit causes the terminal to display an event announcement table...(Fig. 7, Col. 10, lines 33-43).

As per claim 11, Nakaoka discloses:

Said control unit generates an event announcement table according to a schedule of a plurality of received messages...(Fig. 20, Col. 16, lines 48-58).

As per claim 12, Nakaoka discloses:

Said control unit stores information associating contents of a plurality of events in a time-series multiple level structure...(Col. 10, lines 45-56, Fig. 7).

As per claim 14, Nakaoka discloses:

A message generation unit setting a deletion condition of a message, wherein said message for which the deletion condition is set can be arbitrarily deleted...(Col. 13, lines 9-17).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakaoka (US Patent 6,092,048).

As per claim 13 , Nakaoka fails to disclose:

A message generation unit setting information limiting a transfer of a confidential message, wherein said control unit limits the transfer of the confidential message for which the information limiting the transfer of the confidential message is set...

Official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the message generation art for the transfer of a confidential message to be limited. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art for a confidential message to be limited with the motivation of securing the confidentiality of the message and not allowing this type of message to be displayed to the wrong people.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Akiba K Robinson-Boyce whose telephone number is 703-305-1340. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday–Friday 8:30 am-5pm.

Art Unit: 3623

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 703-305-9643. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7238 [After final communications, labeled "Box AF"], 703-746-7239 [Official Communications], and 703-746-7150 [Informal/Draft Communications, labeled "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"].

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

*A.R.B.*

A. R. B.  
May 3, 2002

TARIQ R. HAFIZ  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100